

Appl. No. 09/978,200

Reply to Office Action of: January 12, 2006

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for reviewing the present application.

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 is amended inserting the step "receiving a certificate request from a correspondent" prior to the step of generating a string. Claim 1 is also amended deleting "said string being generated from information contained in a request for said certificate" and inserting "from information contained in said certificate request" at line 4. Claim 1 is also amended replacing "obtain" with "generate" at line 6, and replacing "for retrieving a corresponding certificate from said database" with "said certificate being stored at an address; and" at line 6. Claim 1 is also amended inserting the step "making said string available for use by said correspondent in generating said address therefrom to retrieve a corresponding certificate from said database" subsequent to the step of utilizing the string.

Claim 7 is amended inserting "at said address" following "database" in line 5, inserting "enable said recipient to generate said address therefrom, wherein said address" prior to "indicate" in line 5, replacing "indicate" with "indicates" in line 5, and inserting "by said recipient" following "retrieval" in line 6.

Claim 10 is amended inserting "generating an address from said string at which said certificate is to be stored" prior to "storing" in line 6, replacing "a" with "said" prior to "certificate" in line 6, replacing "an" with "said" prior to "address" in line 7, deleting "being identifiable from said string" in line 7, replacing "locator" with "string" in line 8, and inserting "at said address" following "database" in line 10.

No new subject matter is believed to have been added by way of the above amendments.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,903,882 to Asay et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as follows.

Claim 1 is directed to a method of allocating an address to a certificate, to enable the storage of the certificate in an addressable database. Claim 1 as amended includes a step of receiving a certificate request, and a step of generating a string for use as a certificate locator

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from information contained in the request. The string is then utilized to generate the address at which the certificate is to be stored, and the string is then made available to the correspondent for later use in generating the address to retrieve the certificate from the database.

Asay teaches a certificate issuance scheme. The certificate request taught by Asay includes an identifier of the primary certificate, which is used for issuing secondary certificates. The Examiner admits in the Office Action that: "Not explicitly disclosed is utilizing said string to obtain said address." The Examiner further states that: "However, Asay et al. teach that the identifier is used in order to gain access to the primary certificate...". Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner, relying on benefit of hindsight in view of the Applicant's disclosure has made an apparent leap of logic in interpreting the teachings of Asay in such a manner.

In particular, Applicant respectfully submits that not only does Asay not teach generating a string as a certificate locator for use in generating an address locator as recited in claim 1, but that there is no motivation in Asay to modify his teachings to arrive at what is claimed.

Firstly, the Examiner cites col. 18, lines 12-20 as teaching the step of generating a string as recited in claim 1. Applicant respectfully disagrees. In the above passage, Asay indicates that the request for a secondary certificate includes an identifier of the primary certificate. However, Asay does not indicate how the identifier is generated, let alone how it may be used at a later time as recited in claim 1. Asay merely indicates the existence of the identifier.

Claim 1 is amended to clarify that the string is generated from information in a certificate request, and thus clearly the string recited in claim 1 is not included in the request itself as taught by Asay. In fact, Asay is entirely silent as to how the string is generated. Therefore, Asay clearly does not teach the steps of receiving a certificate from a correspondent and then generating a string from information contained in the request.

Secondly, even if (for the sake of argument) a person skilled in the art were to believe that Asay does teach a string for use as a certificate locator as recited in claim 1 (which Applicant believes is unlikely), Asay does not teach how the string can be used to store a certificate or how a correspondent may later locate the certificate. Claim 1 requires that the string is used to generate an address at which the certificate is stored. Claim 1 also requires that the string be made available for use by the correspondent to generate the address to then retrieve the corresponding certificate. Asay is entirely silent as to such use of the identifier.

Clearly Asay does not teach generating a string from information in a certificate request,

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does not teach generating an address from the string, and does not teach making the string available for use in generating the address to obtain the certificate. Therefore, Asay does not teach or even contemplate several steps recited in amended claim 1, and, for at least that reason, claim 1 is believed to be patentably distinguished over Asay.

Thirdly, as noted above, Asay does not teach generating a string from a certificate request but rather includes an identifier in the request itself. Applicant believes that such teachings would lead a person skilled in the art away from using the identifier taught by Asay in the manner recited in claim 1, and thus there is no motivation to make the identifier taught in Asay available for obtaining the address and then obtaining the certificate at that address. Applicant believes that the Examiner has incorrectly interpreted Asay as teaching steps that are clearly not disclosed and in fact are not even contemplated by Asay.

In particular, Asay simply cannot be construed as teaching how to use such an identifier as recited in claim 1 without teaching the independence of the identifier from the certificate itself (which is not even contemplated by Asay). If a person skilled in the art were to use the identifier in Asay as the Examiner suggests would be obvious, it would involve a further pass of the entire certificate request, which Applicant believes would be prohibitive due to the bandwidth requirements in order to do so, and thus Asay provides no motivation to perform such an undisclosed step.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that not only does Asay fail to teach several steps recited in claim 1, but that Asay provides no motivation to depart from what is taught and make several undisclosed modifications. As such, Applicant believes that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Asay. Claims 2-6 being ultimately dependent on claim 1 are also believed to distinguish over Asay.

Applicant advises that independent claims 7 and 10 as amended also require that the string is generated from information in the request and that such a string is available to generate the address at which the certificate is stored for subsequent retrieval. Therefore, claims 7 and 10 and claims 8-9 and 11-8 dependent thereon are also believed to distinguish over Asay.

Summary

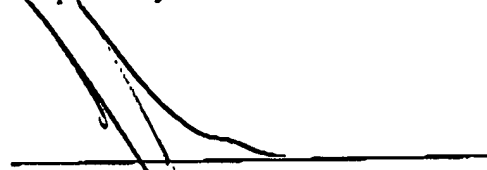
In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims, namely claims 1-18 patentably distinguish over Asay, and as such are in condition for allowance.

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Applicant requests early reconsideration and allowance of the present application. In view of the finality of the subject Office Action, Applicant invites the Examiner to contact the undersigned to discuss the above remarks.

Respectfully submitted,



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